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The Mindful Peace Academy Collection
中英双语 Chinese-English Edition

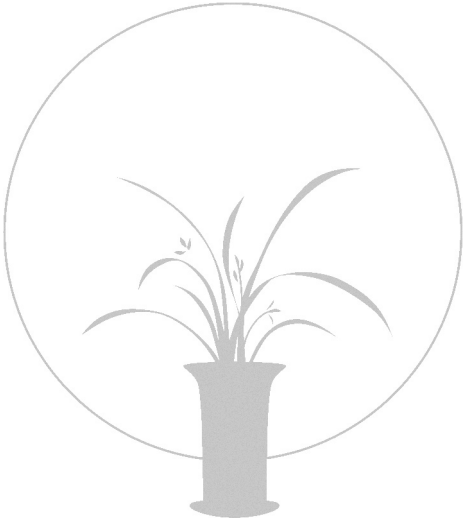
企业家的精神困惑与希望

Entrepreneurs' Perplexities and Aspirations



济群法师
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著

大千出版社



【静心学堂丛书】

文化篇

人生篇

社会篇

信仰篇

实践篇

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非常高兴，在中山纪念堂这个恢宏的场所，和大家共同探讨“企业家的精神困惑与希望”这样一个重要的人生问题。

生活在这个世界，每个人都有这样那样的困惑。佛教认为，这是因为我们内心的无明所致。所谓无明，即没有光明，就像暗无天日、伸手不见五指的黑夜。在这样的生命状态下，我们看不清自己，不知道“我是谁”；也看不清世界，不知道“生从何来，死往何去”。所以，佛教又将无明称为“迷”，与此对应的，则是“悟”。学佛所做的，就是摆脱迷惑，走向觉醒，这是佛法修行的核心所在。

佛教有汉语系、藏语系、巴利语系之分，即通常

所说的汉传佛教、藏传佛教、南传佛教。其中，每个语系又有诸多宗派。但这些宗派只是代表不同的认识角度和修行方法，最终都指向共同的核心——那就是转迷为悟。

我们应该有这样的经验，如果待在一片漆黑的房间，只要出现任何一点异常响动，都会让人胡思乱想，甚至惊恐万状，衍生许许多多的可怕想象。事实上，我们的生命状态正是如此。因为迷惑，就会出现种种误解，带来重重烦恼。

这些错误认知包括两方面，一是对自己的错误认知，二是对世界的错误认知。每个人都是戴着有色眼镜在看自己，看世界，这个眼镜包括我们的感官、情绪、经验等等。因为受到这些因素的影响，所以我们看到的自己和世界，都是被改造过的，充满偏见和主观臆断，这是造成一切烦恼的根源所在。

本次讲座的题目，是“企业家的精神困惑与希望”。在二十多年的弘法过程中，我曾接触过不少企业家。作为这样一个比常人有更多担当和责任的群体，到底会有什么样的困惑？我归纳了一下，主要有以下

几点：一是幸福的困惑，二是成功的困惑，三是安心的困惑，四是道德的困惑，五是慈善的困惑。今天，我们就从佛教的角度来探讨，为什么会有这些困惑，又该如何摆脱。

一、幸福的困惑

如果我们有接纳的能力
知道有生必然有灭
拥有必然伴随失去
就能坦然接受一切变化
非但不会因为失去什么受到打击
还会将一切逆境
转化为成长的增上缘

近几十年的发展，使很多人从贫穷走向富有。早期，人们更多是面对如何赚钱的困惑，希望事业有成的那一天，过上梦寐以求的幸福生活。今天，很多人富起来了，成为众人羡慕的成功人士，名车豪宅，周游世界，幸福是否如期而至了呢？其实未必。有关资料显示，中国富豪中抑郁症患者不在少数，甚至有不少身家亿万者相继自杀。他们在功成名就的灿烂光环下，以如此决绝的方式结束人生，何其不幸！

为什么会这样？是幸福对他们格外吝啬吗？是幸福与他们天生无缘吗？都不是。原因在于，我们的前提就设定错了。我们把财富等同于幸福，以为有钱就能获得幸福。事实上，它只是构成幸福的诸多因素之

一，不是必然的，也不是决定性的，更不能将两者划上等号。

那么，如何才能获得人生幸福？我觉得，应该具备以下五个素养。

1．接纳不幸的能力

俗话说，人生不如意事常八九。生活中，时常会发生各种不幸，包括身体健康，也包括家庭、情感、事业、人际关系等各个方面，都可能出现这样那样的变故。很多人本来过得风平浪静，但只要发生一点挫折，或一件不符合自我设定的事，整个人就崩溃了，陷入极度的烦恼中。

我们对人生充满期待，而我们期待的幸福，多半是建立在顺境之上。我们希望一切都按自己的设想进行，不愿接纳任何逆境，甚至根本就不具备接纳逆境的能力。但我们要知道，世界是无常变化的，顺境必然伴随着逆境。如果没有这样的认知，就会在顺境时忘乎所以，在逆境时倍受打击。

反之，如果我们有接纳的能力，知道有生必然有灭，拥有必然伴随失去，就能坦然接受一切变化。非但不会因为失去什么受到打击，还会将一切逆境转化为成长的增上缘。事实上，逆境是相对而言的。就某件事来说，或许是影响事情顺利进展的阻碍；但对我们自身来说，往往是一种提醒，让我们检讨，自己还有哪些方面做得不够，为什么会招感这样的因缘？从而及时调整，不断完善，更从容地迎接人生挑战。

当一切逆境都不能干扰我们，当所有不幸都被我们接纳并转化，还有什么能阻碍幸福的步伐呢？所以说，接纳不幸才是人生幸福的首要保障。

2．幸福需要有福

古人视“五福临门”为祥瑞，所谓五福，即长寿、富贵、康宁、好德和善终。一是长寿，福寿绵长，不是早夭或遭遇横祸而死。二是富贵，富甲一方，且受人尊敬。三是康宁，身体健康，内心安宁。四是好德，宅心仁厚，慈悲待人，使福报可持续发展。五是

善终，临命终时如瓜熟蒂落，安详而去，为人生划上圆满句号。

如何才能拥有这样的福报？就需要培植福田，播种善果。我们在年轻时，往往信奉“人定胜天”，以为只要自己努力，什么事都做得成。有了一定人生阅历之后，会发现生活远不是那么简单。除了自身努力，机遇的差别，也会带来完全不同的人生道路。从佛教角度来说，所有机遇都不是无缘无故的，而是源于自身积累。其中，既有今生的努力，也有往昔的福报。

福报来自耕耘。我们希望人生顺利，就要带着慈悲心去帮助那些贫苦无依的人，带着感恩心去报答一切有恩于我们的众生，带着恭敬心去尊重那些有德的师长和智者。就像播种才能收获那样，只有培植福田，人生才能有源源不尽的福报。

3．少欲方能知足

其实，幸福就是需求得到满足时的一种感觉，而这种满足正是所得与欲望之间达到的平衡。如果把所

得比作分子的话，欲望就是分母。当所得超出欲望，我们会觉得有意想不到的收获。而所得小于欲望时，我们就会觉得不满足，不平衡。每个人的所得是相对固定的，能否感到满足，很多时候是取决于这个分母，取决于欲望的大小。

如果一个人欲望少，不需要太多所得就能达成平衡，生存成本比较低，相应的，幸福的成本也比较低。反过来，如果欲望太大，需求太多，就像一个超大的分母，必须有同样大的分子才能达成平衡，生存和幸福的成本也将随之提高。所以，古圣先贤都告诫我们，知足才能常乐。

有个成语叫“欲壑难填”。如果对欲望不加节制，任由它无限扩张，那么无论你拥有多少，与这个无限大的分母相比，也是微不足道的，永远不能达成平衡，幸福自然遥遥无期。

4．积极正向的思维

有些人看问题偏于负面，遇到什么都忧心忡忡，

甚至会平白无故地想出很多问题，杞人忧天即是一例。也有些人能在任何事情中发现有利因素和希望所在，不论环境如何，都能随遇而安，乐在其中。可见，我们对世界的感受，完全取决于自己的认知模式。现在的积极心理学，就是帮助我们训练正向思维方式。无论面对什么，都能发现其中的意义，从而挖掘自身潜在的具有建设性的力量。

从佛教角度而言，不仅要正向地看问题，更要以智慧如实观照，所谓“慈悲没有敌人，智慧不起烦恼”。你的思维模式，决定了你的世界。当你带着一份仇恨、对立的心看世界，会觉得所有人都在和你过意不去。反之，如果带着慈悲、包容的心看世界，会觉得所有人都亲切友好，没有谁是你的敌人。同样，如果我们带着错误观念看问题，时刻都会制造烦恼。而学会以智慧观照内心，审视外境，就能在面对每一个问题时，从中学习并成长。

佛法的不同经论，如《金刚经》《心经》《六祖坛经》等，提供了大量的人生智慧。千百年来，中国古人正是依这些经典修身养性，调整心行。这些智慧同

样适用于今天的人，如《金刚经》“所谓……即非……是名……”的三段式，《心经》“色不异空，空不异色”的空性思想，都可以教导我们在入世时培养超然、无所得的心态。

5．良好的心态

幸福的关键在于我们的心。心既是幸福的源头，也是痛苦的源头。当内心现起烦恼时，就会没完没了地制造痛苦。现代人有了丰足的物质生活，我们今天拥有的一些享乐，是古代帝王都望尘莫及的。但我们快乐吗？事实上，烦躁、压力、迷茫、空虚、没有安全感，才是人们使用频率最高的关键词。而这一切的制造者，正是“心”。所以说，心就是情绪的加工厂。你有一条什么样的生产线，就会加工出什么样的产品。

我们什么时候最容易开心？就是内心充满正能量的时候，也是放下压力、没有烦恼的时候。当我们完全放空时，才能体会到心灵深处涌现的欢喜。这是心本来具有的能力。就像一个泉眼，当你把遮挡它的石

头、杂草、污泥全部清理之后，清泉就会汩汩而来。

以上，是获得幸福必须具备的五个条件。可见，幸福是由综合因素构成的，不是有钱就能买到的，也不是享乐就能获得的，那只是我们的一厢情愿而已。如果想要过得幸福，一是要增加抗压力，能够接纳不幸；二是要培植福田，使幸福可持续发展；三是要少欲知足，降低幸福成本；四是要正向思维，具备转化的智慧；五是要有良好的心态，使幸福有充分的生长空间。

二、成功的困惑

一个人是什么
比拥有什么重要得多
你拥有什么
和你只有暂时的关系
而你是什么样的心态和人格
则会长久影响你的生命
不仅在这一生
还会生生世世地产生作用

什么是成功？成功的标准是什么？成功的意义又是什么？现在有不少企业家，虽然事业有成，但过得很累。原因主要有三点：一是身心都休息不下来，浮躁动荡，片刻不停。二是缺乏安全感。我们原来觉得，没钱没权的人才没有安全感，为什么拥有那么多还是没有安全感呢？三是得不到认可，很多人追求成功，是希望出人头地，光宗耀祖，为什么有钱有势后，并没有得到预期的尊重和认可？

1．评估系统的偏差

这些困惑的产生，是因为对成功的认识存在偏差。

社会对成功的评估系统中，最为人熟知的，是福布斯之类的财富排行榜。它所关注的只是拥有多少财产，并以这些数字作为成功标杆。这个评估系统的最大问题，是仅仅从做事的角度，或者说，仅仅从结果来认定成功与否，严重忽略了做人的部分。

事实上，做事和做人是不可分割的两个方面。如果单纯追求做事，把扩大企业、积累财富、提高地位作为人生追求，很容易被我执所利用，使所有努力都用于满足自我的各种感觉。

世间的人，除了生存之外，基本都在为三种感觉而奋斗，那就是自我的重要感、优越感和主宰欲。所谓重要感，即通过努力，使自己在某个群体中突显出来。进一步，是努力在身份、地位、财富等各方面比别人优越。再进一步，就希望别人都能顺从于我，以我为中心，被我主宰和支配。

这些感觉，正是我执的三种表现形式。我们一辈子忙来忙去，到底为谁打工为谁忙呢？其实，真正的幕后主使就是这个“我执”。所谓我执，就是我们对自己的错误认定。也就是说，我们都在为这个

错觉打工。

无论是谁，也无论在什么领域，要营造这样的重要感、优越感和主宰欲，都不是容易的事。而要维护这三种感觉，就更是辛苦！因为人外有人，天外有天，我们不可能在任何时候都很重要，都很优越，都以你为中心。如果你在乎这些感觉，一旦它们受到挑战，焦虑、失落、挫败等种种负面情绪就会接踵而至。所以说，这三种感觉隐含着极大的副作用。如果把它作为成功的象征来追求，注定会让自己疲于奔命。

2．忽略做人的问题

除此以外，忽略做人又会带来什么问题呢？如果把做事当作唯一目的，没有做人的标准和底线，很可能急功近利，干出很多不该干的事情，甚至不择手段，铤而走险。如果这是属于道德范围的不良行为，就会使人良心不安，被愧疚折磨；如果这是属于触犯法律的犯罪行为，还会受到法律制裁，付出沉重代价。可见，单纯把做事和结果作为成功标准，有着种种潜在

的过患。

真正的成功，不仅体现在做事，还伴随着做人。在传统的东方文化中，特别重视为人处世之道，以成为君子乃至圣贤为人生目标。在佛教中，则是以成就佛菩萨品质为修行目标。也就是说，做人才是根本，做事不过是做人的一个方面，一种手段。

所以，我们应该本着做人的原则去做事。在做事过程中，完成我们的人生追求，印证我们的人生价值。如果立足于这个角度，做人和做事就能有机结合在一起。

3．成功人士应该具备的素养

作为一个企业家，对如何做事，应该有丰富的经验。以下，我从佛教的角度，对一个成功人士应该具备什么素养，提供四点建议。

（1）有精神追求

这个精神追求，包括信仰，也包括崇高的人生信

念和相应的道德准则。说到精神追求，不少人可能觉得有点空洞，有点陌生。在物欲横流的今天，大家熟悉的是物质追求，是各种产品的升级换代。精神追求是什么？又该如何追求？

我曾应“戈友会”（重走玄奘路的企业家们）之邀，为他们讲过“玄奘的精神”。在一千多年前，玄奘三藏靠什么支撑他穿越茫茫戈壁，在严酷的自然环境中独行万里？除了对信仰的虔诚，还有“勤奋好学、为法忘躯、淡泊名利、临危不惧、无我利他”的精神追求，这是他克服一切艰难险阻的动力所在。

人的存在包括物质和精神两个层面。在我们内心，既有不良心理活动，也有正向心理因素，这将直接影响到我们的生命状态。没有健康的身体固然痛苦，但没有健康的心灵，更会让人生不如死。近年来，抑郁症患者与日俱增，不少人为此饱受折磨，走上绝路。即使看似健康的群体，也往往被焦虑、茫然、缺乏安全感所困扰，心事重重，不得自在。如果我们有过这样的经历，或周围人有过这样的经历，就会真切感受到，心理健康究竟有多么重要。

高尚的精神追求，可以引导我们开发生命内在的良性潜质，成就健康的心态和人格。现代人关注的往往是“我拥有什么”，却不重视“我是什么”。其实，一个人是什么比拥有什么重要得多。你拥有什么，和你只有暂时的关系，而你是什么样的心态和人格，则会长久影响你的生命。不仅在这一生，还会生生世世地产生作用。

改革开放后，对物质压抑已久的渴望得到释放。这种爆发力是如此之强，几乎以席卷一切的态势，冲击着所剩无多的传统道德。很长一段时间，甚至流行着“道德多少钱一斤，良心多少钱一斤”的调侃。如果没有精神追求，道德自然就一文不值。由此带来的问题是什么？是个人心态的扭曲，是家庭伦理的丧失，是社会公德的缺位，是生态环境的破坏。新闻中，触目可见各种恶性案件，正是道德缺失后的必然结果。

只有重建高尚的精神追求，我们才会知道道德的重要性。作为企业家来说，虽然要创造物质财富，但同时应该有精神追求，并具备相应的道德修养。因为道德是锻造人格的原材料。只有通过对道德的践行，

才能成就健康的心灵，高尚的生命品质。这种精神财富是物质不可比拟的，是每个生命需要的，也是整个社会需要的。

（2）合法经营，生财有道

如果单纯以做事为导向，人们就会以牟利作为压倒一切的标准。结果是，工厂生产假货，农民滥用农药，商家欺诈销售，甚至连医院、学校都想方设法地创收。当一切都在向钱看的时候，我们都成了受害者或施害者，并使整个社会陷入人人自危的恶性循环中。

怎样改变这一现状？就要将做事和做人结合起来，以做人的成功为导向。作为企业家，我们的行为不仅关系到自己，也直接影响到许许多多的人。如果在遵循道德的前提下合法经营，经营企业就是自利利他的善行，既能使自己获利，也能使员工受惠，还能为社会提供产品，创造财富。这是保证事业可持续发展的关键所在，因为大家信任你，社会需要你。

更重要的是，这样做可以让内心坦荡，没有任何不安和愧疚。如果为利益不择手段，做了不该做的事，

就像埋下一个隐患，随时要担心它的爆发。即使没有遭受法律惩罚，也会受到良心谴责，惶惶不可终日。这样的话，即使赚得再多，或是成了别人眼中的成功人士，又有什么快乐可言？就像金玉其外败絮其中那样，终有一天，会因真相暴露而遭人唾弃。

（3）保有超然的心态

现代人普遍活得很累，原因是什么？无非是因为贪著，因为心对外境粘得太紧，对财富和权力粘得太紧。当我们有十分在乎时，会带来十分的压力；而当我们有一百分在乎时，就会带来一百分的压力；当这种在乎超过一百分时，我们就会被自己制造的在乎彻底压垮。或许有人会说，做企业就意味着各种身不由己的责任，随便一句“放下”，不是不负责任吗？须知，不粘著不等于不努力，而是在积极努力的同时，不被结果和成败所转。

怎样才能放下粘著？这就需要学习佛法智慧，这是解粘去缚的特效良药。我曾和心理学界有过多次交流，并就“《心经》与心理治疗”“《金刚经》与心理

治疗”等主题进行探讨。为什么古代文人对《心经》《金刚经》情有独钟？就是因为这些经典可以帮助他们透彻世间真相，厘清物我关系，从而知道自己在这个世间应该如何定位，如何自处。

《金刚经》有个著名的偈颂：“一切有为法，如梦幻泡影，如露亦如电，应作如是观。”当我们用这种智慧来审视事业、情感、家庭和人际关系时，内心就会多一些超然物外的豁达。在这样的心态下，我们一样可以积极开拓事业，一样可以承担家庭责任，一样可以处理人际关系。当所有这些不再对你形成干扰，人生才会因此自在。

总之，不论身处顺境还是逆境，佛法智慧对我们都有莫大助益。顺境时，让我们有努力的方向；逆境时，让我们有超然的心态。所以，对于比常人有更多责任的企业家来说，尤其应该学一些佛法智慧，才能以出世之心做入世之事，以超然之心看风云变幻。

（4）培养利他心，参与公益慈善

佛法认为，一切烦恼痛苦都来自我执。生活中我们可以看到，越是在乎自己的人，往往活得越累，越辛苦。因为他要防范的东西太多了，随时都要担心自身利益受到侵犯，发展到极端，会觉得防不胜防，不惜与所有人为敌。反之，当一个人更多地关注社会大众，参与公益慈善，心胸就会随之开阔，我执也会随之弱化。当我执得到对治，还有什么可以让我们心生烦恼、痛苦不堪的呢？

利他不仅可以弱化我执，还能使慈悲心得到增长。这是属于正向的心理因素，也是令身心恢复健康的免疫力。当我们内心充满慈悲，处处想着他人时，不良心行就没有生长空间了。同时，因为和他人广结善缘，也会收获善意的回应，让我们的心从冷漠变得温暖，从坚硬变得调柔。一个温暖而调柔的人，让他人欢喜，更让自己舒服。

4．做人的成功标准

什么是做人的成功标准？我觉得，首先是生活过得开心、幸福、有质量，而不是让工作占据生活的全部，在日复一日的忙碌中，压力重重，疲惫不堪。其次是家庭和谐，妻贤子孝，并对家人有正确的引导和教育，而不是因为忙于工作应酬，甚至自身品行不端令亲人感到痛苦。第三是得到社会的认可和尊重，这主要取决于你的公益心和利他心，是否愿意将所得回馈社会，惠及大众。第四是身心健康，有相应的道德文化修养，而不是为了事业失去健康，甚至出卖良心。第五是事业有成，使员工因为你的企业而成长，使大众因为你的企业而受益。

总之，对成功来说，做人和做事不可偏废，其中又以做人为根本。现在的人为什么对成功产生困惑？就是因为对成功的定义从开始就错了，单纯追求做事的成功，忽略做人的成功。结果把事情做成后，却发现健康问题、人生问题、家庭问题乃至社会问题接踵而至。身体不健康，就无法享用物质财富；心灵不健

康，无论拥有什么，依然烦恼重重，不得自在。如果一个人身心不健康，即使拥有再多财富，在别人眼里再“成功”，又有什么意义呢？

三、安心的困惑

每个人都具备觉悟的本性
只要找到它，认识它
就能明心见性
但开悟后还要继续修行
直到真正圆满福慧资粮后
方能成就菩提
从这个意义上说
佛法就是生命的自救之道

在我接触的企业家中，不少人都存在安心的困扰。虽然已经赚了很多钱，生存早已不成问题，甚至有了几十辈子也享用不尽的财富，但还是没有安全感，甚至说不清这种不安全感来自何处。同时，总觉得心浮气躁，无法安静，让自己活得很累。为什么会这样？如何解决安心的问题？

1．如何获得安全感

安全感主要由两个因素造成，一是社会因素，二是内心因素。在这个全球化的时代，从政治环境、社会环境到市场环境，很多看似毫不相关的因素都会影

响到我们。比如美国的股市会影响中国市场，此外，世界各地的战争、自然灾害及种种意想不到的状况，也和我们有着千丝万缕的关系。而在我们身边，社会治安混乱，恶性案件频发，不知什么时候，我们也会碰到这些问题。这让生活充满了各种不确定。

这些外在环境之所以会对我们产生影响，关键在于我们对它有一份依赖，有一份在乎。人们总是对自己所拥有的充满永恒的期待。虽然我们知道人有生老病死，旦夕祸福，但在潜意识中，这些仿佛都与自己无关。我们对自己的默认设定，是健康平安，诸事顺利。包括对感情、家庭、事业等与我有关的一切，都有这样一份期待。如果这种期待的程度很强烈，并对此产生依赖的话，就会因为害怕失去而产生不安全感。

要摆脱不安全感，首先要接纳无常的事实。“诸行无常”是佛教的三法印之一，它告诉我们，从内在身心到外在世界，包括感情、家庭、人际关系，包括社会、国家、世界，乃至一切的一切，都是无常变化的。如果真正明白无常是诸法实相，存在于一切法，一切时，那么，我们就会接纳而非抗拒这种变化，更

不会在变化尚未发生时就心存恐惧。没有依赖，就没有失去依赖的恐惧；没有在乎，就没有在乎而得不到的失落。

我们的心，本来是圆满而独立的。《坛经》中，六祖在悟道时发现："何期自性，本自清净！何期自性，本不生灭！何期自性，本自具足！何期自性，本无动摇！何期自性，能生万法！"为什么这颗清净且能生万法的心会失去独立？就是因为我们把自己丢了，所以要向外寻找。

在寻找过程中，我们会不知不觉地建立各种依赖，作为自我的投射。比如手机，今天有很多人已经把手机视为身心的一部分，视为自身的某个器官，根本无法离开，甚至出现"手机依赖症"的心理疾病。一旦手机不在身边，就魂不守舍，焦躁难安。不过在几十年前，世界上还根本没有手机这个东西，更谈不上为此影响生活，影响身心。即使在几年前，没有微博、微信等沟通方式时，人们对手机的依赖也没有如此强烈。仅仅几年，手机已经把很多人成功地驯化为"低头族"，而且是数量巨大的一个族群。

这种对手机的依赖是生命本来的需要吗？显然不是，而是我们在使用过程中不知不觉培养起来的。事实上，我们对世界的每一种依赖，都是自己培养起来的。对外在世界的依赖越多，受控的因素就越多，就越容易患得患失，害怕失去。反过来，我们的依赖越少，生命就越独立。只有真正独立之后，我们才能做心灵的主人。

那么，怎样才能摆脱已经建立的依赖？一方面要树立正见，知道自己贪著的对象是怎么回事，也知道贪著本身是怎么回事。另一方面还要通过禅修，将这种认识落实到心行，对此确定无疑，而不仅仅是流于表面的知道。当我们的心完全自足，对世界不再有任何依赖，也就没什么需要担心的，自然不存在安全感的问题。

2．静心之道

很多人会熟悉这样一句话：“我很想静一静，但怎么都静不下来。”为什么？其中很重要的一个原因，

就是贪著太多，欲望太多。整个社会都要拉动消费，所有商家都在鼓励消费，在这样的诱惑下，贪著失控了，欲望膨胀了。很多东西，我们在不曾拥有前，一样可以过日子。可一旦习惯它的存在，你就很难舍弃它。这一切，让我们对物质有了更深的依赖，也让生活和幸福的成本越来越高。最终的结果，是让我们变得越来越忙碌。

当家中塞满各种可有可无的用品，贪著和欲望也在内心扔下数不清的垃圾，让我们的心变得同样拥挤。这些垃圾还会不断发酵，制造热恼，让生命处于被控的状态。凡夫最大的特点，就是面对念头时不知不觉，无法自主。我们不知不觉地发脾气，不知不觉地形成各种串习。每天焦躁不安，想让自己静下来，做不到；总在忙忙碌碌，想让自己休息一下，也做不到；内心压力重重，希望自己不要执著，不要太累，还是做不到。

佛教所说的禅修，就是通过相应方法开启生命潜能，点亮智慧心灯，对每个念头保持观照。《心经》开篇为“观自在菩萨”，这个“观”正是修行要领之

一。当我们带着观照审视内心，看清自己在做什么，想什么，进而看清念头的来龙去脉，它就会慢慢平息下来，从波涛起伏回归平静。

当内心归于平静，我们就能感受到其中蕴含的力量。佛教所说的涅槃，正是一种高度的安静，所谓“涅槃寂静”。它不只是外在的安静，更是平息所有躁动后，生命内在所呈现的强大的安静。

《金刚经》中，须菩提向佛陀请教说：“善男子善女人，发阿耨多罗三藐三菩提心，云何应住，云何降伏其心？”如何降伏内心的躁动、迷惑、烦恼？整部《金刚经》都是在帮助我们安心。禅宗公案记载，二祖请教初祖时，问曰：“我心未宁，乞师与安。”也是请求安心之道。

释迦牟尼佛对人类最大的贡献，是发现每个生命都具有自我拯救的能力。生命有很多迷惑，很多烦恼。面对这些迷惑和烦恼，我们会觉得沮丧、无奈，觉得困扰、痛苦。但生命中还有一盏智慧明灯，正如《坛经》所说的那样：“菩提自性，本来清净，但用此心，直了成佛。”每个人都具备清净、觉悟的本性，只要

找到它，认识它，就能明心见性。但开悟后还要继续修行，直到真正圆满福慧资粮后，方能成就菩提。从这个意义上说，佛法就是给我们提供生命的自救之道，佛陀就是告诉我们如何获得自救能力的导师。

四、道德的困惑

道德不仅是社会的需要
也和我们的人生息息相关
只有遵循道德
才能获得长远且没有副作用的利益
认清这一点
当道德和利益出现暂时冲突时
我们就知道该如何取舍了

现在社会风气不好，许多行业都盛行潜规则。在我们做事过程中，时常要面临何去何从的选择，有时甚至会触及道德底线。而企业都以利益为导向，为了实现更大的利益，往往会在道德和利益之间产生纠结。在人们心目中，如果为道德舍弃利益，虽然听起来感觉不错，但真要这么做就未免迂腐。至于为利益舍弃道德，似乎是个明智的选择，却终究有点说不出口。可见，我们内心并不是真的认可这种选择。那么，我们为什么不能为道德舍弃利益？这种舍弃真的吃亏了吗？

从理论上，我们知道社会需要道德，也觉得一个人应该遵守道德。但在生活中，我们又觉得道德有些

空洞，有些遥远，似乎只是一个用来说说的道理。我们很少会去思考：道德对自己有什么好处？和人生有什么关系？我觉得，提倡道德的关键，就是让大家认识到：为什么要遵循道德？道德的价值何在？了解这一点，首先要知道，道德与人生究竟是一种什么关系。

1．道德与人生

社会上，往往以学历、出身或肤色、种族等因素对人进行区分。但佛教是通过行为来评判一个人的高下。你的行为符合道德，就是一个高尚的人；你的行为缺乏道德，就是一个低劣的人。

佛教认为，生命是无尽的积累，就像一条河流，从无穷的过去一直延续到无尽的未来，今生只是其中的一个片段。这条生命长河就是由我们的业力组成，所谓生命无尽，业力无穷。“业”是指某种行为，如农业、工业、商业等。而佛教所说的“业”，主要包括身体、语言和心理三种。所有的行为举止，属于身体行为，又称身业；所有的谈话交流，属于语言行

为，又称语业；所有的起心动念，属于心理行为，又称意业。

无论身业、语业还是意业，只要曾经发生，就会在内心留下影像，成为种子。这些种子又会不断重复，在内心形成强大的心理力量。有些人容易嗔恨，不断重复，内心就会积聚难以磨灭的仇恨力量；有些人喜欢赚钱，不断重复，内心就会对金钱形成巨大的贪著。此外，还有慈悲、宽容、自私、冷漠等各种心行。正是它们的不断重复，形成了我们的心态、性格，最终造就我们的人格，主导生命的走向。所以，我们现在的心态、性格、观念和能力，都是代表生命的不断积累。你的行为，决定你会成为什么样的人。

作为生命来说，当下的存在，是由过去的行为所决定。而现在的所作所为，则会决定我们今后成为什么样的人。会成为文明的人，还是野蛮的人？会成为智慧的人，还是愚痴的人？会成为无私的人，还是自私的人？会成为高尚的人，还是庸俗的人？这些不是偶然的，也不是神的安排，而是由各自的行为所决定。

这些行为不仅决定个人的生命走向，同时也会对

社会造成影响。如果你的行为恶劣，就会危害大众，对社会造成破坏；如果你的行为高尚，则能利益他人，给社会带来福祉。

那么，究竟什么行为对生命发展是健康而合理的？什么行为对生命发展是不健康也不合理的？这是古今中外一直都在探讨的。正因为如此，才形成了法律和道德，从而对人们的行为进行规范。从某种意义上说，法律就是最低限度的道德，也是道德的底线所在，主要作用是阻止危害他人的不良行为。而道德是代表人类的精神追求和自我约束，用以阻止法律范围以外的不良行为，同时引导我们积极张扬善行。

从法律角度来说，不是所有犯罪行为都会受到制裁，其中存在或多或少的漏洞。所以人们在面对法律时，容易心存侥幸。而宗教的约束，必须建立在信仰的前提下。有信仰，与此相关的道德约束才能对你产生作用。佛教的道德对佛教徒是有效的，基督教的道德对基督教徒是有效的，伊斯兰教的道德对伊斯兰教徒是有效的。如果没有信仰，不相信因果报应，不相信神的惩罚，这些道德就无法对你产生作用。

佛教有个偈颂叫“诸恶莫作，众善奉行，自净其意，是诸佛教”。也就是说，我们需要从行为本身，去审视这个行为的合理性。所以，我现在强调的是心灵因果。善行和不善行，其实是代表健康和不健康的心理因素。当我们造作不善行，就是在张扬不健康的心理，自己将成为首当其冲的受害者。同样，善行就来自健康的心理，当我们造作善行，就是在张扬健康的心理，自己也将会成为最大的受益者。

这一点，正是道德的真正价值所在。所以说，我们仅仅是基于对自己负责，基于生命健康发展的需要，也应该自觉遵守道德。如果舍弃道德，不是对别人不负责，恰恰是对自己的不负责。

2．道德的价值

道德的价值，主要体现在以下四个方面。

首先，道德可以让人安心。只要不是丧尽天良的人，一旦做了违背道德的事，总会或多或少地良心不安，甚至吃不好，睡不香，背负沉重的心理负担。反

过来说，只要遵守法律和道德，任何时候都能心安理得地生活，不用担心某个行为被人发现，更不用担心因此身败名裂或受到惩罚。

其次，道德是一种精神财富，可以帮助我们完善人格，使生命健康发展。道德并不是高高在上的，每个道德行为的当下，我们都能感受到这一行为带来的正向力量，感受到生命因此得以改善，得以提升。我们应该都有这样的经验，当我们以清净心行善、利他时，哪怕是微小的善行，也会让心灵得到滋养。

第三，道德使我们得到社会的尊重和认可。有人觉得，在今天这个社会，遵循道德就会被人欺负，处处吃亏。事实是这样吗？想一想，我们是不是希望自己的朋友善良、慈悲、讲究信用、真诚待人？将心比心，别人也会对我们有这样的希望。佛教的五戒，就能让我们在与人相处的过程中，获得信任，自他和乐。当一个人能不杀生、不偷盗、不邪淫、不妄语、不饮酒时，人们就不用担心被他伤害，也不用担心被他欺骗。在这个缺乏诚信的时代，一个可以信任的人，几乎已经成了稀缺资源。只要一以贯之地这样做人，不

论走到哪里，都会广受欢迎。

第四，遵循道德会让物质利益得到保障并持续发展。在世界各地，那些延续至今的老牌企业，都是因为秉承诚信、童叟无欺等道德行为，才能安然渡过竞争，屹立不倒。如果没有道德基础，哪怕一时做得很大，也是难以长久的。儒家所说的“积善之家必有余庆，积不善之家必有余殃”，也是说明了这个道理。

总之，道德不仅是社会的需要，也和我们的人生息息相关。只有遵循道德，我们才能获得长远且没有副作用的利益。认清这一点，当道德和利益出现暂时冲突时，我们就知道该如何取舍了。如果为了眼前利益舍弃道德，事实上，就是在舍弃更大的长远利益，并在人生埋下隐患，无疑是得不偿失的。

五、慈善的困惑

如果不是源于慈悲
而是为了尊重、荣誉、光环
去从事慈善
就会患得患失，权衡利弊
这样的行为
即使能在客观上给对方带来帮助
也只能算是善行而已
并不是真正的慈善

近年来，不少企业家开始热心公益，造福社会，但一路走来，对慈善却有了越来越多的困惑。据说，港台两位大慈善家临终前都在感慨：难道我的慈善做得还不够吗？言下之意，像自己这样乐善好施，应该有更美满的人生结局。为什么会产生这样的质疑？就是把慈善的意义视为外在结果，觉得这个结果和自己的付出并不对等。

此外，有些企业具备规模之后，大众就对他们产生要求，最后只能迫于舆论，无奈地“被慈善”。还有些企业家在做了慈善之后，非但没有得到尊重、认可等正面回应，反而招来各种误解。近年来，关于慈善的各种新闻，包括炒作和负面报道，在媒体上沸沸

扬扬。从这一点也反映出，中国目前的公益环境还不太健康。人们既不习惯参与慈善，也不习惯随喜别人的慈善行为。

那么，我们究竟应该如何看待慈善？这就需要知道：慈善的本质是什么？意义是什么？它所带来的最大回报是什么？

1．慈善的本质

在很多人的感觉中，慈善就是一种施舍行为。不管用什么心态去施舍，哪怕只是作秀，也统称为慈善。事实上，慈善的本质并不仅仅是行为本身，而是通过这一行为传递的慈悲大爱。这也是各种宗教文化都崇尚的正向心理。

儒家推崇仁爱，所谓仁者爱人，不仅要爱你的亲戚朋友，还要从家族延伸到社会，爱天下的人。基督教提倡博爱，视之为神的德行，要超越亲情，把无私的爱奉献给人类。而佛教强调慈悲，慈是给予快乐，悲是拔除痛苦，由此获得无苦之乐。进一步，是将这

念慈悲不断扩大，成为观音菩萨那样的大慈大悲。大到什么程度？就是无限。不仅包括亲人，也包括仇敌；不仅包括每个人，也包括一切动物。如果还有一个众生是你不想慈悲的，就不能圆满大慈大悲。

大乘佛教特别提倡慈悲的修行。首先自己要从迷惑走向觉醒，其次要帮助芸芸众生走向觉醒，离苦得乐。所以，大乘佛教既有出世的超然，也有入世的情怀，而慈善正是实践这一修行的有效途径。

如何完成慈悲的修行？大乘佛教告诉我们，首先要发菩提心，建立崇高的利他主义愿望。只有具备这样的愿望，才是合格的大乘佛子，才能真正走上菩萨的轨道。寂天菩萨的《入菩萨行论》，就是专门讲述菩提心修行的论典，内容系统而有次第，且操作性极强。有了利他的愿望，还要有智慧指导，懂得如何去帮助众生，否则就会好心办坏事。当我们真正具足智慧，体会到平等无别的空性时，就能对无量众生心生慈悲。此外，菩萨道的六度四摄，本身就包含慈善的项目，同时也是我们从事公益慈善的精神引导。

总之，真正的慈善必须立足于慈悲大爱。只有这

样，当你看到众生的痛苦时，才不会有任何其他设定，只是对他的痛苦感同身受，想着他有痛苦，我要帮助他解决。当一个人以正确发心并在智慧指导下参与慈善时，会越做越有力量。随着内在慈悲的壮大，就有能力去利益更多的人。正如《普贤行愿品》所说：“一切众生而为树根，诸佛菩萨而为华果，以大悲水饶益众生，则能成就诸佛菩萨智慧华果。”我们想要成佛，不能离开众生。如果不关心众生，不慈悲众生，就像树没有根一样，是不可能存活，更不能开花结果的。

如果不是源于慈悲，而是为了尊重、荣誉、光环去从事慈善，就会患得患失，权衡利弊。这样的行为，即使能在客观上给对方带来帮助，也只能算是善行而已，并不是真正的慈善。因为它不是来自纯粹的爱心和慈悲，本身就夹杂着各种染污的成分，难免会带来这样那样的副作用。这也正是目前公益慈善会出现种种乱象的主要原因之一。

2．慈善的意义

说到慈善，很多人可能会觉得：慈善和我有什么关系？我凭什么要帮助他人？那么，慈善仅仅是帮助他人的行为吗？仅仅是单纯的付出吗？事实上，世间任何事都是相互的，而从大乘佛教的角度来说，自利和利他更是统一的。慈悲他人，就是善待自己；利益他人，就是提升自己。那么，慈善对我们自己有哪些具体的意义呢？

第一，慈善可以成就慈悲心，让内心充满阳光。平常人关注的都是自己，如果心里只有这个小小的“我”，对自我的执著就在增长，贪嗔痴也在增长。而这种执著和贪嗔痴，只会给我们带来痛苦，带来烦恼。而当我们开始关注众生，并通过种种慈善行为去利益他们的时候，内在的慈悲就会随之增长。反过来，又能带着慈悲心做更多的公益慈善，进一步圆满慈悲。一个真正慈悲的人，心里装满了众生，烦恼和痛苦自然没有立足之地。

第二，慈善可以让我们成就无量福德。在践行慈

善的过程，我们可以通过施舍来克服悭贪吝啬，通过服务大众来克服我执我慢，让自己变得越来越慷慨，越来越乐意帮助别人。如果我们和众生广结善缘，就像播种一样，会源源不断地收获福报。

第三，慈善可以消除人与人之间的冷漠、隔阂与对立。在今天这个社会，人与人的接触往往是没有温度的，这是因为我们缺乏慈悲，不懂得关注别人。通过慈善，可以帮助我们重新定位自己的关注点，把对自己的在乎转向对众生的在乎，把对众生的冷漠转向对自己的冷漠。为什么要这样做？因为凡夫无始以来只在乎自己，结果带来无穷痛苦；而佛菩萨心中没有自己，只有众生，最终成就无量功德。通过慈善，可以让我们从内心关注众生，从而有效消除对立，融化冷漠与隔阂。

第四，慈善可以对治嗔恨，有利于社会的和谐安定。今天，因为道德缺失、竞争激烈等原因，很多人嗔心炽盛，使整个社会充满戾气，恶性案件频频发生。嗔心和戾气也是因缘和合的，如果这个社会多一些慈善，就会多一些温暖人心的帮助，多一些化解戾气的

关怀。人们就不会因为痛苦而心生嗔恨，因为绝望而走向极端。

第五，慈善不仅可以成就慈悲，还可以圆满智慧。在不断利他的过程中，内在的我执和习气都会随之弱化。因为我们需要关心他人，就没有精力来纠缠这个“我”，心就会变得越来越纯净，越来越空灵，为开启智慧营造良好的心灵氛围。

总之，慈善的本质是慈悲，这既是帮助他人的善行，也是完善自身的捷径。正如《道次第》所说，我执是一切衰损之门，利他是一切功德之本。所有灾难痛苦都来自我执，所有功德利益都来自利他。可见，慈善不仅和我们自己有关，而且关系重大。

六、结束语

困惑正是找到希望的起点
因为有困惑
我们就会积极寻找
解决困惑的方法
在寻找过程中
我们才有可能发现真理
最终走出困惑，走向光明

以上列举了几种比较有代表性的困惑，当然，人生的困惑不仅仅是这些，还有每个人必须面对的终极问题，如命运的困惑、生死的困惑等。其实有困惑不是问题，很多觉得自己没有困惑的人，往往不是没有困惑，而是从来没有思考过这些问题，甚至不觉得人生需要思考，需要追问。

苏格拉底说：没有经过思考的人生是不值得过的。而从佛教的角度来说，众生无量劫来流转六道，生而为人，是唯一可以转变命运的机会。如果不对人生进行反思，寻找出路，就会无休止地沉沦苦海，随业流转。所以我们不要躲避困惑，更不要对它视而不见。

事实上，困惑正是找到希望的起点。因为有困惑，

我们就会积极寻找解决困惑的方法。在寻找过程中，我们才有可能发现真理，最终走出困惑，走向光明。



Entrepreneurs' Perplexities and Aspirations

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It's my pleasure to discuss with all of you about "Chinese Entrepreneurs' Perplexities and Aspirations," an important topic of life, in this magnificent Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall.

Living in this world, everyone experiences various perplexities. According to Buddhism, these perplexities arise from ignorance within our minds. Ignorance is the absence of light—completely immersed in darkness. In such a state of life, we misunderstand the "self," not knowing the truth about the "self." We also misunderstand the world, not knowing where we were from before birth or where we are going after death. That's

why Buddhism also calls ignorance "delusion" and its opposite "enlightenment." Studying Buddhism is to get rid of delusion and march toward enlightenment, which is the core of practicing the Dharma.

Buddhism is generally divided into three linguistic traditions—the Chinese, the Tibetan, and the Pali—which correspond to Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, and Theravada Buddhism. Each linguistic tradition has various schools, which represent different interpretations of the teachings and methods of practice. But they all point to the core of turning delusion into enlightenment.

We may have had this experience: when we stay in a pitch-dark room, even the slightest unexpected noise can freak us out, triggering lots of terrifying thoughts. In fact, our life is exactly like this dark room. This state of delusion brings all kinds of misunderstandings and afflictions.

These wrong views have two aspects: one is the wrong view of the "self," and the other is that of the world. Everyone sees the "self" and the world through tinted lenses shaped by their senses, emotions, and experiences etc. As we are affected by the above factors, the "self" and the world we see are all distorted and full of prejudice and presumptions. This is the root of all afflictions.

Today's topic is "Chinese Entrepreneurs' Perplexities and Aspirations." Over the past two decades of spreading Buddhist teachings, I have interacted with many entrepreneurs. They shoulder significant responsibilities in society—but what kinds of perplexities come with that role? There are, as I have summarized, mainly the following five aspects: first, perplexities about happiness; second, perplexities about success; third, perplexities about inner peace; fourth, perplexities about morality; last but not least, perplexities about charity. Today, from a Buddhist perspective, we'll explore why these perplexities arise, and how we can free ourselves from them.

I

Perplexities about Happiness

In the past few decades, economic development has lifted many people from poverty to wealth. In the earlier days, people were primarily concerned with how to make money, hoping that one day, after achieving success, they would finally enjoy the happiness they had long dreamed of. Today, many have indeed become wealthy and are admired as successful individuals, owning luxury cars, living in grand mansions, and travelling the world. But has happiness arrived as expected? Not really. According to relevant data, a considerable number of China's wealthiest individuals struggle with depression. What's worse is that some billionaires among them have committed suicide

one after another. Amid the brilliance of success and fame, they ended their lives in such a resolute way—how truly tragic!

Why does this happen? Does happiness not smile upon them? Is happiness naturally beyond their reach? Neither. The reason is that we have set the wrong premise. We equate wealth with happiness, believing that being rich can bring happiness. In fact, wealth is just one of many factors that make up happiness. It is neither guaranteed nor decisive, and we should not mistake wealth for happiness.

So, how can we achieve true happiness in life? I believe it requires cultivating the following five qualities.

1. The Capability to Accept Misfortune

As the saying goes, "Life is full of undesired sufferings most of the time." In life, misfortunes occur frequently, whether in health, family, affection, career or interpersonal

relationships. Some people may get used to a peaceful life. But the moment they face a setback or something that doesn't meet their expectations, they break down and fall into deep distress.

We hold high expectations for life, and the happiness we seek is often built upon favorable conditions. We hope that everything goes as we wish, unwilling to accept adversity. And at times, we even lack the ability to accept it. However, we should know that the world is impermanent, and that good times are always accompanied by adversities. Without this understanding, we will lose ourselves in favorable conditions and be overwhelmed by adversities.

However, if we can accept things as they are, and understand that birth inevitably leads to death, and that gains inevitably come with losses, we can calmly embrace all changes. Instead of being overwhelmed by losses, we will turn all adversities into opportunities for growth. In fact, adversity is relative. It may seem like an obstacle hindering

smooth progress. But for us, it often serves as a reminder, prompting us to reflect on areas where we haven't done well enough, and why we have attracted such circumstances. In this way, we can make timely adjustments, continuously improve, and face the challenges in life with greater ease.

When no adversity can disturb us, and when all misfortunes are accepted and transformed by us, what else can stand in the way of our happiness? That's why embracing misfortune is the fundamental guarantee of a happy life.

2. Cultivate Blessings

The ancient Chinese regarded the arrival of the "Five Blessings" as an auspicious sign. These Five Blessings refer to longevity, prosperity, health and peace, virtue and a good death. The first is "longevity"—a long and blessed life, free from premature death or unexpected calamities. The second is "prosperity"—great wealth and high status, accompanied by the respect of others. The third is "health

and peace"—a healthy body and a peaceful mind. The fourth is "virtue"—a kind and benevolent heart, treating others with compassion, ensuring that blessings continue to grow. And the last is "a good death"—when the end of life comes, departing peacefully, like a ripe melon falling off its stem, marking a perfect end to one's life.

How can we attain such blessings? It requires cultivating fields of blessings and sowing the seeds of good deeds. When we are young, we often believe in the saying "Man can conquer nature," thinking that as long as we work hard, we can accomplish anything. However, with more life experience, we come to realize that life is far more complex. To achieve success in life, our own effort is essential. Yet the chances we get in life can also lead to completely different paths. From a Buddhist perspective, opportunities do not arise without cause; they stem from our own accumulated blessings—both from present efforts and from past lives.

Blessings come from diligent cultivation. If we wish for

a smooth and successful life, we must help those who are poor and helpless with compassion, repay all beings who have shown us kindness with gratitude, and honor virtuous teachers and sages with respect. Just as sowing seeds is necessary for a bountiful harvest, only by cultivating fields of blessings can we ensure a continuous flow of blessings in our lives.

3. Fewer Desires Bring Contentment

In fact, happiness is just a feeling that arises when our needs are satisfied, and this satisfaction comes from a balance between what we gain and what we desire. If we compare what we gain to the numerator, then our desires are the denominator. When our gains exceed our desires, we feel unexpectedly rewarded. However, when our gains fall short of our desires, we feel dissatisfied and unbalanced. Since what we gain is relatively fixed, whether we feel content often depends on the denominator—the extent of our desires.

When we have fewer desires, we can reach inner balance with fewer gains. Our cost of living is low, so is the cost of gaining happiness. On the other hand, when desires are excessive, it is like having an enormous denominator: we must have an equally enormous numerator to maintain the balance. As a result, the cost of both living and happiness increases accordingly. That is why the ancient sages told us that "Contentment brings constant joy."

There is an idiom: Greed is like a valley that can never be filled. In other words, if we don't restrain our desires, but allow them to expand infinitely, then no matter how much we possess, it is trivial compared to the ever-expanding denominator. Balance will remain out of reach, and happiness is nowhere in sight.

4. Positive Thinking

Some people tend to think negatively. They worry about everything they encounter and even imagine many problems out of thin air. It is just like the man from the

ancient Kingdom of Qi who feared the sky might fall, a classic tale of groundless anxiety. On the contrary, others can find hope and opportunities in any situation. Regardless of the circumstances, they adapt with ease and find joy wherever they are. This shows that our perception of the world is entirely dependent on our cognitive patterns. In light of this, modern positive psychology helps us cultivate positive thinking, find meaning in whatever we face, and tap into our inner strengths.

From a Buddhist perspective, it is essential not only to approach problems with a positive mindset, but also to wisely contemplate the world as it is. As the saying goes, "Compassion sees no enemies, and wisdom gives rise to no afflictions." The way we think shapes the world we see. If we see the world through the lens of hatred and opposition, we will feel as if everyone is against us. But if we see the world with compassionate acceptance, we will feel that everyone is kind and friendly, and no one is our enemy. Similarly, if we view problems with wrong perceptions, we will constantly create endless suffering for ourselves.

However, by learning to observe our minds and examine the external environment with wisdom, we can learn and grow from every problem we encounter.

When it comes to wisdom, many Buddhist sutras, such as the *Diamond Sutra*, the *Heart Sutra*, and the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, offer abundant wisdom for life. For centuries, ancient Chinese people have drawn upon these teachings to cultivate their character and refine their mindset. These timeless insights remain just as relevant today. The *Diamond Sutra*, for instance, presents a three-part reasoning structure[1]: "What is called....., is not truly.....; that is why it is called....." And the *Heart Sutra* teaches the concept of emptiness: "Form is not different from emptiness; Emptiness is not different from form." All these teachings can help us cultivate a detached mindset, free from clinging, when we engage with the world.

1. The *Diamond Sutra* often uses the three-part reasoning structure. One example is: "What is called sentient beings is not truly sentient beings; that is why they are called sentient beings" ; Another is: "What is called all dharmas is not truly all dharmas; that is why they are called all dharmas."

5. Healthy Mindset

The key to happiness lies in the mind. The mind is both the source of happiness and the root of suffering. When afflictions arise within, they endlessly generate suffering. Today, people enjoy abundant material comfort—many of the pleasures we take for granted were beyond the reach of ancient emperors. But are we truly happy? In fact, the most common feelings connected with modern life are anxiety, stress, confusion, emptiness, and insecurity. And what is the root of all this? The mind itself. So, the mind is the factory of emotions—whatever production line it runs determines the emotions it turns out.

When are we most likely to feel happy? It is when our minds are filled with positive energy, and when we let go of pressures and afflictions. Only when we completely empty ourselves can we feel the joy arising from within? This is an ability the mind inherently possesses. Just like the source of spring, when you remove all the rocks, weeds, and mud, its pure waters will flow freely without end.

The five conditions above are essential for attaining happiness. It is clear that happiness arises from many factors; it cannot be bought with money, nor gained just by enjoying pleasures. Believing that money or pleasures can bring happiness is merely wishful thinking. If we want to live a truly happy life, we need to cultivate the following qualities. First, strengthen the resilience to stress and learn to accept misfortunes. Second, cultivate a field of blessings, so happiness can grow sustainably. Third, be content with fewer desires to lower the cost of happiness. Fourth, cultivate positive thinking and embody the wisdom to transform adversity. Fifth, maintain a healthy mindset that provides ample space for happiness to grow.

II

Perplexities about Success

What is success? What are the criteria for success? And what is the significance of success? Nowadays, many entrepreneurs, despite being successful in their careers, lead exhausting lives. There are three main reasons for this: First, they find it hard to rest both physically and mentally—constantly restless and unable to stop for a moment. Second, they lack a sense of security. Although we used to think that only those without money or power lacked security, why do the wealthy still feel insecure when they possess so much? Third, they fail to receive recognition. Many people pursue success, hoping to be outstanding and bring honor to their ancestors. Why is it that they

still do not receive the expected respect and recognition, even after gaining wealth and power?

1. When Evaluation System Goes Astray

These perplexities arise from an inaccurate view of success. One of the most well-known systems for evaluating success is the wealth rankings, such as Forbes. They focus solely on how much wealth a person possesses, and use these figures as benchmarks for success. The biggest problem with this evaluation system is that it defines success solely by external achievements, while seriously neglecting moral cultivation.

In fact, what we achieve is inseparable from what we cultivate within. If we focus solely on external accomplishments, such as expanding a business, accumulating wealth, or elevating social status, it is easy to fall into the trap of self-attachment. When that happens, all our efforts are used to satisfy the self-centered desires.

Beyond basic survival, we are generally striving for three kinds of feelings: a sense of self-importance, a sense of superiority, and a desire for control. A sense of self-importance means striving to stand out within a group. From there, we seek to surpass others in terms of identity, status, wealth, and other aspects. Moreover, we want others to follow us, revolve around us, and remain under our control.

These feelings are precisely the three forms of self-attachment. Throughout our lives, we hustle and bustle, but who are we really serving? In reality, the real manipulator behind this is "self-attachment." Self-attachment refers to our misconception of self. That is to say, we are all working for this false appearance of "self."

Regardless of who we are or what field we are in, cultivating a sense of self-importance, superiority, and control is no easy task. And maintaining these feelings is even harder! Because there will always be someone better, something beyond our reach, it is impossible to always feel

important, superior, or at the center of everything. If we cling to these feelings, once they are challenged, negative emotions such as anxiety, disappointment, and frustration will inevitably follow. That's why these feelings come with significant side effects. If we pursue them as symbols of success, they will only leave us exhausted.

2. Neglecting Moral Cultivation

Moreover, what is the problem of neglecting moral cultivation? If we take the external results as our only goal and ignore moral standards or bottom lines, we may seek the immediate gains, take unethical actions, or even resort to any means just to get what we want. If these actions are morally wrong, they leave us uneasy and burdened with guilt. If such actions break the law, we will face legal punishment and pay a heavy price. This shows that defining success only by what we do and what we achieve can lead to many potential problems.

True success lies not only in what we do, but also in what

we cultivate within. Traditional Eastern culture emphasizes how we conduct ourselves and interact with others, with the aim of becoming a *Junzi*[1] or even a sage. In Buddhism, the goal of practice is to attain the inner qualities of buddhas and bodhisattvas. In other words, moral cultivation is the foundation, while external results are just one aspect, or a means to support moral cultivation.

Therefore, we should act in accordance with moral principles. Through our actions, we fulfill our pursuits and affirm our values. In light of this, what we do and what we cultivate within can come into natural harmony.

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1. In the pre-Qin period, the word junzi simply meant the son of a ruler. Later, during the Spring and Autumn period, Confucius gave it a new meaning. He redefined it as a moral ideal in Confucianism, expressed through three virtues: the benevolent are free from worry, the wise are free from confusion, and the courageous are free from fear. Over time, the word junzi came to carry three main meanings: (1) a moral model of noble character, (2) a ruler or person of high status in ancient society, and (3) a respectful way of addressing others.

3. Qualities of Successful People

As entrepreneurs, you all have rich experience in doing things. From a Buddhist perspective, I'd like to offer four suggestions on the qualities of successful people.

1) Having a Spiritual Pursuit

This spiritual pursuit includes faith, as well as noble life beliefs and corresponding moral principles. When it comes to spiritual pursuit, many people may find it somewhat abstract or unfamiliar. In today's world of prevailing materialism, people are far more used to chasing material wealth and upgrading their possessions. So, what exactly is a spiritual pursuit? And how should we cultivate it?

I was once invited to give a talk on "The Spirit of Xuanzang" by the *Geyou* Association, a group of entrepreneurs retracing Xuanzang's journey. Over a thousand years ago, as he traversed the vast, desolate Gobi Desert, journeying alone for thousands of miles, what sustained him through

such harsh natural conditions? Beyond his deep devotion to faith, he was inspired by a spiritual pursuit, such as diligence in learning, selfless dedication to the Dharma, detachment from fame and fortune, fearlessness in the face of danger, and cultivation of no-self and altruism. This unwavering spirit was the driving force that enabled him to overcome all hardships and obstacles.

We have both a physical and a mental side. In our mind, there are both negative and positive mental qualities, which directly shape our state of being. Lacking physical health is undoubtedly painful, but lacking mental well-being can make life worse than death. In recent years, more and more people have been suffering from depression—many experiencing deep pain, and some even driven to tragic ends. Even those who seem healthy are often plagued by anxiety, confusion, and a lack of security. They are burdened with worries and find it hard to feel at ease. If we or people around us, have ever had such experiences, we can truly understand how crucial mental health is.

A noble spiritual pursuit can guide us to develop the positive potential within our lives, cultivating a healthy mindset and character. People today often focus on "what I have" rather than "who I am." In fact, who a person is matters far more than what they possess. What you have is only temporarily connected to you, while your mindset and character will have a lasting impact on your life—not only in this lifetime but also across countless lifetimes.

After China's reform and opening-up, the long-suppressed desire for material wealth was unleashed. This outburst was so overwhelming that it swept through almost everything, challenging the remnants of traditional morality. For a long time, even sarcastic remarks became popular, such as "What's the price of morality? What's the price of conscience?" Without spiritual pursuits, morality naturally becomes worthless. What are the consequences? A distortion of personal mindset, the collapse of family ethics, the absence of social morality, and the destruction of the ecological environment. Then it is no surprise that the news is filled with shocking

reports of heinous crimes—an inevitable result of moral decline.

Only by rebuilding a noble spiritual pursuit can we truly understand the importance of morality. For entrepreneurs, while we strive to create material wealth, we should also cultivate spiritual aspirations and possess corresponding moral integrity. This is because morality serves as the foundation for shaping our character. Only through living out moral values can we attain a healthy mind and a noble quality of life. This kind of spiritual wealth is far beyond material wealth—it is essential not only for every individual but also for the society as a whole.

2) Conduct Business Legally and Create Wealth Ethically

If we focus solely on doing business, we will prioritize profit above all else. As a result, factories produce counterfeit goods, farmers abuse pesticides, businesses engage in fraudulent sales, and even hospitals and schools seek every possible way to generate revenues. When everything

revolves around money, we all become victims or perpetrators, and society falls into a vicious cycle where everyone feels insecure.

How can we change this situation? We must integrate doing business with being a virtuous person. More importantly, being a virtuous person is the guiding principle of our life's success. As entrepreneurs, our actions impact not only ourselves but also others. If we run our businesses legally and ethically, doing business itself becomes a way to benefit both ourselves and others. In this way, we can earn profits, benefit our employees, provide goods to society, and create wealth. This is the key to ensuring the sustainable development of our business because people trust us, and society needs us.

More importantly, acting this way allows us to have a clear conscience, free from anxiety and guilt. If we resort to unethical means for profit, it is like planting a hidden danger that could erupt at any time. Even if we escape legal punishment, our conscience will torment us, leaving us

restless and anxious. In this case, no matter how much we earn or how successful we appear in the eyes of others, what joy is there to be found? Just as the saying goes, "beautiful on the outside, rotten on the inside," the truth will eventually come to light, leading to disgrace.

3) Maintaining a Transcendent Mindset

Now, why do people often feel exhausted? It is simply because of attachment. Our mind is so attached to external circumstances, especially to wealth and power. The more we care, the more pressure we create for ourselves: if we care 100%, we'll feel 100% of the pressure; if we care beyond that, we'll eventually be crushed by the pressures we've created for ourselves. Some may argue that running a business entails unavoidable responsibilities, so isn't it irresponsible to simply say "let go" ? But we must understand that "letting go" doesn't mean being irresponsible. It means striving with full effort, while not being swayed by the results, whether success or failure.

To let go of attachment, we must learn the wisdom of Buddhist teachings, which serve as a powerful remedy for breaking free from attachment. I've discussed with experts in psychology on topics such as "the *Heart Sutra* and Psychotherapy" and "the *Diamond Sutra* and Psychotherapy." Why were ancient scholars so fond of these sutras? It's because these sutras can help us gain deep insight into the true nature of the world, clarify the relationship between ourselves and the world, and learn how to position ourselves and conduct ourselves in this life.

There is a famous verse in the *Diamond Sutra*: "All conditioned phenomena are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow; like dew, or a flash of lightning. Contemplate them thus." When we apply this wisdom to reflect on our careers, emotions, family, and interpersonal relationships, we develop a broader, more detached state of mind. With this mindset, we can still actively pursue our careers, fulfill our family responsibilities, and manage interpersonal relationships. When all these no longer disturb us, we become truly free.

In conclusion, whether we are in favorable or adverse situations, Buddhist wisdom can greatly benefit us. In favorable situations, it provides direction for our efforts; in adverse times, it helps us cultivate a transcendent mindset. That's why entrepreneurs, who shoulder greater responsibilities, especially need to learn Buddhist wisdom. This wisdom enables them to engage in worldly affairs with a detached mind, and to navigate the ever-changing world with a transcendent mindset.

4) Cultivating Altruism and Engaging in Charity

Buddhism teaches that all afflictions and suffering stem from self-attachment. In daily life, we can see that the more a person cares about themselves, the more exhausted they become. They feel the constant need to protect their interests, always fearing potential threats. Taken to the extreme, this mindset can lead to a sense of endless defensiveness, even to the point of turning against others. Contrarily, when a person shifts their focus toward the well-being of society, and engages in charity and

public service, their mind naturally opens up, and their self-attachment gradually weakens. Once the attachment to self is diminished, what else could still trouble us or cause us suffering?

Altruism not only weakens self-attachment, but also nurtures compassion. This is a positive mindset, serving as an inner immunity that helps restore physical and mental well-being. When our minds are filled with compassion and we constantly think of others, negative mindsets have no space to grow. Meanwhile, as we build kind connections with others, we naturally receive goodwill in return. This transforms our minds—melting coldness into warmth and softening rigidity into gentleness. A person who is warm and gentle brings joy to others, and more importantly, finds true ease and comfort within themselves.

4. The Standards for Success in Moral Cultivation

What are the standards for success in moral cultivation? I believe there are five key aspects: First, live a happy and

fulfilling life. Don't let work occupy your entire life. Otherwise, you'll find yourself constantly busy every day, overwhelmed by pressures, and utterly exhausted. Second, maintain harmony within the family—having a virtuous spouse, filial children, and the ability to guide and educate your loved ones properly. Do not become so occupied with your work or social obligations that you neglect your family, or worse, bring them suffering through your own misconduct. Third, gain recognition and respect from society. This depends on whether you have an altruistic mind for public service, or whether you're willing to benefit others with what you've gained. Fourth, maintain both physical and mental health, along with moral and cultural cultivation. True success doesn't mean sacrificing health for your career or even betraying your conscience for personal gain. Fifth, achieve success in your career in a way that helps your employees grow, and allows your business to bring real benefits to the public.

In summary, both personal integrity and professional achievement are essential to true success, yet character is

the foundation. Why do people today feel confused about success? It is because they define success incorrectly from the start. They focus solely on achieving external goals while neglecting the inner cultivation of character. As a result, even after accomplishing everything, they often find themselves facing one problem after another, such as health issues, personal struggles, family conflicts, and even societal challenges. Without physical health, material wealth cannot be enjoyed; without mental health, no matter how much they possess, they remain burdened with afflictions and lack peace of mind. Even if they possess great wealth or appear "successful" to others, without physical and mental health, what does it really mean?

III

Perplexities about Inner Peace

Many entrepreneurs I've met struggle with inner peace. They have earned enough money, so survival is no longer a problem. Their wealth could last for generations, yet they still feel insecure and cannot even say where that insecurity comes from. Additionally, they often feel restless, unsettled and exhausted. Why does this happen? How can we truly attain inner peace?

1. How to Cultivate a Sense of Security

Our sense of security is mainly shaped by two factors: external conditions and our state of mind. In this era of

globalization, many things seem unrelated to us, such as the political, social and market conditions, but they still affect us. For example, when the U.S. stock market fluctuates, it can affect China's market as well. What's more, wars, natural disasters, and other unexpected events worldwide are closely connected to us. Even around us, social unrest and vicious crimes may happen at any time. All these make us feel uncertain about life.

These external conditions impact us mainly because we depend on them and care about them. People often expect what they have to last forever. Even though we know that life includes birth, aging, illness, death, and all kinds of ups and downs, we often feel these won't happen to us. We just expect that we'll stay healthy and safe, and that everything will go smoothly. This expectation extends to everything connected to us—our relationships, families, careers, and more. When we expect too much and become dependent on them, we may feel insecure because we're afraid of losing them.

To get rid of insecurity, the first step is to embrace the truth of impermanence. In Buddhism, one of the Three Dharma Seals is "All phenomena are impermanent." It teaches us that everything is constantly changing, from our body and mind to the world, including romantic relationships, interpersonal connections, family, society, nation, and even the world itself. If we truly understand impermanence as the true nature of all phenomena, present in everything at all times, then we will accept change rather than resist it. We won't fear any change before it even happens. If we do not rely on anything, we will not fear losing it. If we do not expect anything, we don't suffer from not getting what we expect.

Our minds are originally complete and self-sufficient. In the *Platform Sutra*, the Sixth Patriarch realized the enlightenment, stating:"How unexpected! The self-nature is originally pure. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally neither arising nor ceasing. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally complete. How unexpected! The self-nature is originally unmoved. How unexpected!

The self-nature can produce all dharmas." If this mind is pure and gives rise to all phenomena, why does it no longer remain self-sufficient? Because we've lost touch with our true nature, we begin to rely on things outside ourselves.

As we seek things outside ourselves, we often come to rely on them without even realizing that we're projecting our sense of self onto them. Take smartphones, for instance. Today, many people see them as part of their body and mind, as if they were vital organs. They simply can't live without them. Some even develop a psychological condition known as "smartphone dependency syndrome." The moment their phone is out of reach, they feel restless and uneasy. However, several decades ago, smartphones didn't even exist in the world, let alone impact our lives and mental well-being. Even just a few years ago, before social media platforms such as Weibo and WeChat existed, people didn't rely on their phones nearly as much as they do today. Yet, in just a few years, smartphones have successfully tamed countless people into "screen addicts."

Do we really need smartphones as much as we think we do? Clearly not. It's something we unknowingly cultivate through using them. In fact, anything we rely on in this world is something we've cultivated ourselves. The more we rely on external things, the more they control us, and the more easily we become anxious and afraid of losing them. Contrarily, the less we rely on the outside world, the more self-sufficient we become. Only when we are truly self-sufficient can we become masters of our own minds.

So how can we break free from the things we've come to rely on? First, we must cultivate the right view—understanding both the nature of what we're attached to and the nature of attachment itself. Second, we need to internalize the teachings through meditation, so they take root in our minds, rather than staying at the level of mere knowledge. When our minds become completely self-sufficient and no longer rely on anything in the world, there's nothing left to worry about, and the issue of insecurity naturally disappears.

2. Path to Tranquility

Many people often say, "I really want to calm down, but no matter what I do, I just can't find peace." Why is it like this? One crucial reason is that we crave too much. Now, the entire society is geared towards boosting consumption, and businesses everywhere are constantly pushing us to spend. Under such temptation, our craving spirals out of control, and desires expand endlessly. In fact, before owning many things, we could still live well without them. But once we get used to having them, it becomes hard to let them go. So we rely on material possessions more deeply than ever, driving up the cost of both living and happiness. In the end, we just become busier and busier.

When our homes are stuffed with all sorts of unnecessary items, greed and desire also leave behind piles of mental clutter, making our minds just as crowded. This inner garbage keeps fermenting, giving rise to afflictions, and placing our lives under its control. In fact, the defining trait of ordinary beings is that we are unaware of our

thoughts as they arise, and unable to control our own minds. Without realizing it, we lose our temper and form bad habits. Every day, we feel restless, wishing we could calm down, but we can't. We are always busy, longing for a moment of rest, but it never comes. We are burdened by inner pressure, hoping not to be so exhausted, yet we still can't make it.

In Buddhism, meditation is a method to unlock the potential of life and illuminate the lamp of wisdom, so that we can keep aware of every thought as it is. Just as the *Heart Sutra* begins with Guan Zizai Bodhisattva, the word "Guan," which literally means "to contemplate," represents one of the key principles of Buddhist practice. When we observe our minds with this contemplative wisdom, we can see clearly what we are doing and thinking. As this practice deepens, we can see clearly how thoughts come and go. In this way, the restless mind gradually calms down, just like waves returning to stillness.

When our mind returns to tranquility, we will perceive

the power it contains. In Buddhism, nirvana is a state of profound tranquility. It is not just external silence, but the profound tranquility that emerges from within after we subdue all restlessness.

In the *Diamond Sutra*, Subhuti asks the Buddha, "World Honored One, when virtuous men and women give rise to the resolve for Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi (the supreme correct enlightenment), how should they abide, and how should they subdue their minds?" In other words, how can we subdue the restlessness, delusion, and afflictions in our minds? In fact, the entire *Diamond Sutra* aims to help us find peace of mind. In the records of Chan koan, when the Second Patriarch Huike once approached the First Patriarch Bodhidharma and said, "My mind is not at peace; Master, please grant me peace." This is also a request for the path to peace of mind.

The greatest contribution Shakyamuni Buddha made to humanity lies in his discovery that every being has the innate ability to liberate themselves. Since life is full of

delusion and afflictions, we often feel discouraged, helpless, and upset, and we suffer because of them. However, within each of us shines the light of wisdom. As the *Platform Sutra* says: "The Bodhi nature is inherently pure. Simply use this mind, and you will directly attain Buddhahood." This implies that everyone possesses a pure, enlightened nature. Once we find it, we can realize enlightenment. However, even after enlightenment, we still need to continue practicing. Only when we attain perfect wisdom and merit can we truly achieve Bodhi. In this sense, the Dharma provides us with a path to self-liberation, and the Buddha is the teacher who guides us how to realize it.

IV

Perplexities about Morality

The current social atmosphere is not favorable, as unspoken, often unethical rules prevail across many industries. In our work, we often face difficult choices—sometimes even ones that cross the bottom line of morality. Since businesses are profit-driven, people strive for greater gains, but they often struggle between profits and morality. In their minds, giving up profits for the sake of morality may sound noble, but in fact, it seems impractical or even naive. On the other hand, sacrificing morality for the sake of profits may seem like a wise choice, but it feels morally wrong—something we hesitate to say out loud. This indicates that deep down, we do not truly endorse this kind

of choice. So why can't we give up profits for the sake of morality? Does this choice really mean we've lost out?

In theory, we understand that society needs morality, and we agree that individuals should adhere to moral principles. But in daily life, we often find morality somewhat abstract and disconnected from us—more like a concept we talk about than a principle we truly live by. We rarely stop to reflect: What are the benefits of morality for ourselves? How does it relate to our lives? I believe the key to promoting morality lies in helping everyone understand: Why should we follow it? What is its true value? To answer these questions, we must first understand the relationship between morality and life itself.

1. Morality and Life

In society, people are often judged by factors, such as education, family background, skin color, and race. However, Buddhism evaluates a person based on their behavior. If your conduct aligns with moral principles, you are a

noble person; if your conduct lacks morality, you are not.

Buddhism teaches that life is an endless accumulation, like a river flowing from the infinite past to the endless future. This present life is just one brief segment. This river of life is formed by our karma. As it is said: "Life is infinite, and karma is endless." The word "karma" means action. For example, people act through agriculture, industry, and commerce. However, in Buddhism, "karma" refers to physical, verbal and mental actions. All bodily behavior is physical action, also known as physical karma; all speech is verbal action, also known as verbal karma; and all thoughts are mental actions, also known as mental karma.

Whether it is physical, verbal, or mental karma, once it arises, it leaves a mental image in the mind, also known as a seed. Then, these seeds keep on repeating themselves, gradually forming powerful mental forces. For example, some people are prone to anger; as it repeats over time, it develops into a deep and lasting hatred within. Others are

drawn to making money; over time, they develop a strong craving for money. The same applies to other qualities, such as compassion, tolerance, selfishness, and indifference. As these qualities repeat over time, they shape our mindset, character, and ultimately our personality—guiding the direction of our lives. So our present mindset, character, views, and abilities all reflect the continuous accumulation of life itself. In short, our actions determine the kind of person we become.

For us, who we are at present is determined by our past actions, while our actions now will shape who we become in the future: civilized or barbaric, wise or ignorant, selfless or selfish, noble or vulgar. These results are not accidental or divinely ordained, but are determined by our own actions.

These actions shape not only the course of our own lives, but also the well-being of society as a whole. If our actions are harmful, they can harm others and disrupt social harmony; but if our actions are noble, they can benefit

others and bring well-being to the community.

So what kinds of behavior are healthy and reasonable for the development of life? And what kinds are unhealthy and unreasonable? This has been discussed throughout history. That's why laws and moral codes are established to regulate human behaviors. In a sense, laws represent the minimum standard of morality and serve as the bottom line for ethical conduct. Their main purpose is to prevent harmful actions against others. On the other hand, morality represents our spiritual pursuit and guides our everyday conduct. It helps prevent misconduct beyond the reach of law, while also encouraging us to actively do good deeds.

From a legal perspective, not all criminal behaviors are punished, due to some loopholes in the legal system. As a result, people may try their luck when facing the law. However, religious discipline must be based on faith. Only then can its moral discipline influence us. For example, Buddhist moral principles are effective for Buddhists,

Christian moral principles are effective for Christians, and Muslim moral principles are effective for Muslims. Without faith—without belief in the law of cause and effect or God's punishments— such moral guidelines will not influence us.

Buddhism has a verse that goes, "Do no evil, do all the good, purify the mind: this is the teaching of buddhas." This means we must examine whether an action is truly reasonable based on its very nature—wholesome or unwholesome. That's why I am emphasizing the causality of the mind. Wholesome actions come from healthy mental states, while unwholesome actions arise from unhealthy ones. When we engage in unwholesome actions, we are manifesting unhealthy mental states, and we ourselves become the first to suffer. Similarly, wholesome actions represent a healthy mindset. When we engage in wholesome actions, we are manifesting healthy mental states, and we ourselves become the greatest beneficiaries. This is precisely where the true value of morality lies. Therefore, we should consciously uphold moral principles, even

if only out of responsibility to ourselves and a need for a healthy life. Letting go of morality is irresponsible for ourselves, not for others.

2. Value of Morality

The value of morality is primarily reflected in the following four aspects.

First, morality can bring peace of mind. Unless we completely lack a sense of conscience, violating moral principles often lead to a certain degree of inner guilt. We may even carry a heavy burden, losing our appetite or having trouble sleeping. Conversely, as long as we abide by the law and uphold moral conduct, we can live with a clear conscience, without fear of being exposed, disgraced, or punished.

Second, morality serves as a spiritual asset that helps us refine our character and promote the healthy development of life. Morality is not something lofty or out of reach. In fact, every moral action allows us to feel its positive

power and sense how it uplifts and enriches our lives. We've all had this experience: when we help others with a pure mind, even the smallest good deed nourishes the mind.

Third, morality brings us respect and recognition. In today's world, some may feel that when we follow moral principles, others will take advantage of us and we will always lose out. Is this really the case? Think about it: don't we all hope our friends are kind, compassionate, trustworthy, and genuine? Others, of course, hope the same from us. By following the five precepts of Buddhism, we can gain trust and foster harmony in our interactions with others. When we refrain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and taking intoxicants, others are not afraid of being harmed or deceived by us. In today's world, where integrity is often lacking, a trustworthy individual is truly precious. As long as we live this way consistently, we'll be welcomed wherever we go.

Fourth, following moral principles helps protect material interests and allows them to grow steadily over time.

Across the globe, the long-standing companies that have stood the test of time are those that uphold integrity and treat all customers, young or old, with honesty and fairness. It is these moral principles that have enabled them to survive fierce competition and remain firmly established over time. Without such a moral foundation, no matter how big a business becomes, it is unlikely to sustain itself over time. As the Confucian saying goes, "A family that accumulates goodness will enjoy lasting blessings, while a family that accumulates evil will suffer lasting misfortune." This captures the same truth.

To sum up, morality is not only essential for society, but also closely connected to our own lives. Only by following moral principles can we gain long-term benefits without negative side effects. Once we see this clearly, we'll know how to make the right choice when morality and personal gain come into conflict. If we give up morality for short-term benefits, we're giving up greater long-term benefits and planting potential dangers in our lives. It's clearly not worth it.

V

Perplexities about Charity

In recent years, many entrepreneurs have become enthusiastic about charity, in the hope of benefiting society. However, over time, some have become increasingly puzzled by their charitable efforts. It is said that two prominent philanthropists from Hong Kong and Taiwan, shortly before passing away, expressed their regret: "Have I not done enough charity?" In other words, they felt that they were so generous to help others, so they should have a more fulfilling ending to their lives. Why does such doubt arise? It is because they viewed the meaning of charity as an external achievement. They felt that this achievement did not match their efforts.

Furthermore, once some businesses reach a certain scale, the public begins to expect them to take on charitable responsibilities. In the end, they may feel compelled to do charity work under pressure from the public. In some cases, some entrepreneurs fail to receive respect or recognition. Instead, they face misunderstandings. In recent years, the media has been full of charity-related news, from exaggerated stories to negative reports. This also reflects that China's current charitable climate is not very healthy. People are not used to participating in charity, or celebrating the good deeds of others.

So, how should we truly understand charity? To answer this, we need to reflect on these questions: What is the essence of charity? What is its true meaning? And what is the greatest reward it can bring?

1. The Essence of Charity

To many people, charity is simply seen as an act of giving. Regardless of the motivation, even if it's just for show, it's

still called charity. However, the essence of charity lies not in the act itself, but in the compassionate love it conveys. This love is a positive state of mind cherished across religious and cultural traditions.

Confucianism advocates benevolence, emphasizing that a truly benevolent person loves people—not only family, relatives, and friends, but all people in the world. Christianity promotes universal love, considering it a divine virtue that transcends familial ties. It calls on believers to offer selfless love to humanity. Meanwhile, Buddhism emphasizes loving-kindness and compassion. Loving-kindness means the wish to bring happiness to others, while compassion is the wish to ease their suffering. So all beings can attain happiness free from suffering. Furthermore, we extend it into great loving-kindness and great compassion, just like that of Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva. How great is this loving-kindness and compassion? It is infinite. That is to say, we embrace not only loved ones, but also enemies, not just human beings, but also all animals. If there is still one being we are unwilling to care

for, we cannot perfect the great loving-kindness and great compassion.

Mahayana Buddhism emphasizes the cultivation of loving-kindness and compassion. First, we must awaken from our delusions. Then, we help all beings move toward awakening, freeing them from suffering and helping them attain happiness. That's why Mahayana Buddhism embraces transcendence beyond the world while benefiting others in this secular world. In this light, charity is an effective path to put this practice into action.

So how can we cultivate loving-kindness and compassion? Mahayana Buddhism teaches that we must first give rise to bodhichitta—the noble, altruistic aspiration to benefit all beings. Only with this aspiration can we be considered a qualified Mahayana practitioner and truly embark on the path of bodhisattva.

A classic treatise on bodhichitta is *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, written by Bodhisattva Shantideva. It's

dedicated to the practice of bodhichitta. It offers a systematic, step-by-step, and highly practical guidance for cultivating this bodhichitta. But altruistic aspiration is not enough, wisdom is also essential to guide our compassionate actions. Without wisdom, even noble aspirations may harm others. When we truly cultivate wisdom and realize emptiness, we can treat all beings equally, and naturally generate loving-kindness and compassion for all beings. What's more, the Six Perfections and the Four Means of Conversion taught on the Bodhisattva Path also include altruistic practices. They also serve as spiritual guidance for these altruistic practices.

Therefore, true charity must be rooted in great compassionate love. In this way, when you see the suffering of others, you won't feel any separation between yourself and them. Instead, you feel their suffering as your own, thinking, "They are suffering. I want to help them alleviate the suffering." When a person engages in charity with correct aspirations and under the guidance of wisdom, they gain more strength over time. As their compassion

grows, they can benefit more people.

As stated in the *Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*: "All sentient beings are like the roots; the buddhas and bodhisattvas are like the flowers and fruits. By nourishing all beings with the water of great compassion, the buddhas and bodhisattvas perfect their wisdom—just like flowers and fruits grow from the roots." If we aspire to attain Buddhahood, we cannot separate ourselves from all beings. Without caring for them, without feeling compassion for them, we are like a tree without roots: impossible to survive, let alone blossom and bear fruit.

If charity work is not motivated by compassion, but driven by a desire for respect, honor, or recognition, people may become overly concerned with personal gain and loss. Even if such actions do bring some benefits to others, they are merely acts of kindness, not true charity. Because they don't arise from pure love and compassion, they are inevitably tainted by self-interest, leading to many

side effects. This is one of the main reasons why so many problems have emerged in today's charity work.

2. The Significance of Charity

When it comes to charity, many people may wonder: What does it have to do with me? Why should I help others? So, is charity just about helping others? Is it merely about giving? In fact, everything in the world is interconnected. Mahayana Buddhism teaches that, benefiting oneself and benefiting others are one and the same. Showing compassion to others is being kind to oneself; benefiting others is uplifting oneself. So, what does charity mean for us?

First, charity can cultivate compassion and fill our minds with sunshine. As ordinary people, we often care about ourselves. If our minds are only filled with this small "self," our attachment to the self grows, along with greed, anger, and ignorance. These afflictions only bring us suffering. But when we start caring for all beings and engage

in charity work to benefit them, our compassion naturally grows. With a compassionate mind, we are inspired to do even more charity work, further perfecting our compassion. A true compassionate person holds all beings in their mind, leaving no room for afflictions or suffering to take root.

Second, charity can help us accumulate immeasurable merits. Through giving, we can overcome greed and stinginess; by serving others, we overcome self-centeredness and arrogance. Gradually, we become more generous and more willing to help others. If we build positive connections with all beings, we will continuously harvest blessings. It is like planting seeds: in time, we will reap the fruits.

Third, charity can dissolve indifference, alienation, and opposition among people. In today's world, our interactions often feel cold because we lack compassion and fail to care about others. Through charity, we can help redirect our focus from ourselves to all beings, transforming

our indifference towards others into a mindset of letting go of self-attachment. Why should we do this? Because since the beginningless time, we have only cared about ourselves, leading to endless suffering, while buddhas and bodhisattvas care only for others, with no self in their minds, and thus attain immeasurable merits. So charity can help us genuinely care for all beings, effectively eliminating opposition and melting away indifference and alienation.

Fourth, charity can help reduce anger and foster a more peaceful and stable society. Today, as morality declines and competition grows more intense, many people are burning with anger. This has created a tense and hostile atmosphere in society, with violent incidents occurring more and more often. But anger and hostility arise out of certain causes and conditions. If there is more charity in the world, there will be more help to warm people's minds and more care to resolve hostility. This helps prevent people from becoming angry due to suffering or going to extremes out of despair.

Fifth, charity not only cultivates compassion but also perfects wisdom. As we keep benefiting others, our self-attachment and bad habits naturally start to weaken. Because we need to care for others, we have no energy to focus too much on ourselves. Gradually, our mind becomes increasingly pure and clear, creating a conducive environment to unlock wisdom.

To sum up, the essence of charity is compassion. It is not only a way to help others, but also a direct path to perfecting ourselves. As stated in the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment,* self-attachment is the gateway to all spiritual decline, while altruism is the foundation of all virtues. All disasters and suffering stem from self-attachment, while all virtues and benefits arise from altruism. Clearly, charity is not only relevant to us, but also carries profound significance for our own lives.

VI

Conclusion

We have explored some typical perplexities above. Of course, life's perplexities go far beyond these. Every individual must eventually face deeper issues, such as destiny, life and death. In fact, having perplexities is not a problem. Often, many people who think they have no perplexities are not free from them. They simply never reflect on these questions, nor realize that life itself calls for deep reflection.

Socrates said, "An unexamined life is not worth living." From the perspective of Buddhism, all beings have been drifting through the six realms for countless kalpas, and

being born as a human is the only opportunity to transform our destiny. Without reflecting on life and seeking a way out, we will endlessly sink into the ocean of sufferings, carried along by the currents of karma. Therefore, we should not shy away from our perplexities, nor should we turn a blind eye to them.

In fact, perplexities are often the starting point of aspiration. Because of our perplexities, we actively seek solutions. It is through this process of seeking that we may discover the truth, resolve our perplexities, and ultimately move toward enlightenment.

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静心学堂为“国际静心协会”旗下的核心公益品牌，致力于传承生命觉醒教育，为现代人提供安顿身心、安身立命之道。我们推广的静心学堂课程体系，为汉传佛教济群长老以四十年修学所证，对当代佛教教育的探索，包括禅意生活、智慧人生和觉醒之道。同时，我们将在世界各地营造具有禅意的空间、彼此增上的氛围，为大众修学保驾护航。

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